

Proposal
For the Establishment of a University Writing Program
February 19, 2004

Preamble:

University Vision and Undergraduate Education

The first of the UC Davis Educational Objectives for students states "Develop effective communication skills: written, oral, interpersonal, and group." Achieving campus educational objectives is central to the learning goal of the UC Davis Strategic Plan.

(<http://strategicplan.ucdavis.edu>). When the 2003 Chancellor's Fall Conference considered implementation of the learning goal, it identified increased attention to student writing skills and investment in a writing center as high priorities. (http://strategicplan.ucdavis.edu/2003_fall_conference_report.pdf) This campus vision for excellence in student writing guides the following proposal for a University Writing Program that will be of high quality, stable structure, and well-positioned for future development. It builds upon our current program, initiatives already begun by Elizabeth Langland, Dean of Humanities, Arts, and Cultural Studies, recommendations from the Academic Senate Undergraduate Council (http://www.physics.ucdavis.edu/kiskis/ug_council/ugc_writing.html), and broad discussions this academic year.

The University Writing Program at UC Davis established a strong writing curriculum in the 1980s. Through writing instruction, support for writing instruction across the campus, and research in composition, the University Writing Program (UWP) furthers the campus-wide educational objective to graduate students who are proficient and effective in written communication. It is one of the most important undergraduate programs at the University, and one that provides the skills whereby a student may succeed or fail, not just at the university, but in later careers and in graduate school. In the last twenty-five years in the United States, we have witnessed an astounding shift in attitudes towards what was once simply designated the composition program. "Rhetoric and Composition" as a new discipline or a reborn discipline (over the last thirty years) represents an emerging area of scholarship. Strengthening the University Writing Program by having a research faculty directing and staffing it, will achieve five important goals: 1) enhance the academic reputation of

the University by adding a research component to the Writing Program; 2) reevaluate, develop, and expand the writing curriculum on the campus and thus improve the quality of undergraduate education; 3) enhance post-baccalaureate career and educational opportunities for UC Davis students; 4) provide graduate students opportunities for research in the field of composition; 5) monitor and assess the educational achievements of the Writing Program.

Proposal

Therefore, to achieve these declared goals of the University, it is proposed that the University Writing Program (UWP) be established as an independent unit housed within the HArCS division of the College of Letters and Science and separate from the Department of English.

1. Academic Charge of the University Writing Program

Following current approaches to cognitive development, the program is designed to foster the intellectual maturation of undergraduate students from their first to fourth year. The Program oversees the lower division composition courses that can be used to satisfy college writing requirements. In addition to an upper-division composition course, the program also offers a series of courses specifically tailored to disciplines and to professions that satisfy the upper-division writing requirement. Besides these academic courses, the University Writing Program provides training for graduate students in writing intensive courses as well as in all courses where a composition requirement can be satisfied. Presently offering a Workshop Program to strengthen the teaching of writing in the disciplines, a major goal of the program is to develop a fully functioning Writing-Across-the-Curriculum Program.

2. Governance

The University Writing Program will become an independent academic program administered within the HArCS division of the College of Letters & Science. A University Writing Board (UWB) will oversee the University Writing Program. In consultation with the faculties of the undergraduate colleges and the Dean of HArCS, the Provost and the Chair of the Davis Division of the Academic Senate shall jointly appoint the members of the UWB.

Membership of the UWB:

Six Senate faculty members broadly representative of the undergraduate colleges,
Director of the UWP,
Chair of the Department of English,
Two undergraduate students,
One graduate student who teaches lower-division composition,
Two Academic Federation members who teach in the UWP,
Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies,
One undergraduate dean,
One associate dean (with the dean and associate dean not from the same college),
One representative from the Undergraduate Council.

The members shall serve staggered two-year terms.

The Chair of the Davis Division of the Academic Senate shall select one of the six Senate faculty members (but not the Director of the UWP) to serve as chair of the board.

In consultation with the Provost, the English Department, and the UWB, the Dean of HARCS shall appoint the Director of the UWP. The Director shall report jointly to the Provost and the Dean of HARCS. The Director shall regularly consult with the UWB.

Writing instruction is central to the mission of the university. As the UWP serves the needs of all undergraduate students, the revenue to support the UWP will be determined in a consultation among the Dean of HARCS, the Director of the UWP, the Provost, and the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies. The budget shall be reported to the UWP and the UWB when other campus units receive their budgets.

The UWP will be a priority in the Comprehensive Campaign.

The UWB shall meet at least quarterly for consultation with the Director. The UWB shall make an annual report on the activities of the UWP and submit it to the Provost and the Chair of the Davis Division of the Academic Senate no later than June 30. It shall include an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the program during the past year, statistics on courses taught and availability of required courses, recommendations for improvements for the

new year, budget recommendations, and an evaluation of the effectiveness of the Director of the UWP.

3. Faculty

Three further goals of the UC Davis Vision and Strategic Plan would be enhanced by the creation of an independent writing program. These include, "Improvement in the ranking of UC Davis programs in national surveys that are based on research visibility and excellence," "Growth in the level of extramural funding across all disciplines," and an "Increase of the proportion of undergraduate classes taught by tenure-track faculty."

To strengthen the Writing Program and give it national prominence, the program will recruit a director with a national reputation in Rhetoric and Composition who will steer the program in the following directions:

Recruit a tenure-track faculty who engage in research in the field of composition and who maintain a research program linked to the University Writing Program (involved in Assessment and Testing); who could develop a Writing-across-the-Disciplines Program; who can represent the Program to the faculty at large, to the UC system, and outside the institution; who would engage in grant-writing. [See attached document for recruitment of a director].

Therefore, it is proposed

That one Senate faculty FTE be allocated for a Director of UWP.

That a search for the Director begin as soon as possible.
That four Senate faculty FTE be allocated for UWP, who may have joint appointments in other departments and colleges. These joint appointments could be in Education, Engineering, Biological Sciences, and/or Letters and Science.

Departments that host new faculty associated with UWP through full or joint appointments will give their recommendations for these academic personnel actions according to the established procedures for new faculty appointments.

That all continuing lecturers presently housed in the Department of English be transferred to UWP.

That all lecturers with one-year contracts hired as a result of a search be transferred from English to UWP.

That UWP assign courses to the following employees of English on the basis of the MOU between UWP and English: graduate students, postdoctoral lecturers, and postdoctoral teaching fellows. [See attached MOU]

4. Staffing

UWP staff will continue to be housed with English staff. Some of this staff would have overlapping responsibilities to be determined by the MSO in collaboration with the director of the UWP, the chair of English, and the staff in the administrative unit.

5. Curriculum

In accordance with the procedures of the Academic Senate, the following English courses are to be decertified as ENL courses and recertified as UWP courses:

- ENL 1
- ENL 18
- ENL 19
- ENL 101
- ENL 102
- ENL 104
- ENL 390 and 392

The following lower division English courses will remain ENL courses:

- ENL 3
- ENL 4
- ENL 5

The following graduate courses will remain ENL courses:

- ENL 391, 393, & 396

6. Courses that Satisfy Composition Requirements

Each college on the Davis campus establishes its own mandatory writing requirements. Within the larger governance context provided by the Academic Senate Courses Committee, the Director of UWP and the chairs of all

departments offering composition courses shall jointly recommend courses to satisfy those requirements.

7. General Education Writing Experience Courses

The UWP will support General Education Writing Experience courses by offering training in writing instruction to the faculty and graduate students teaching these courses. Further, the UWP will advise the General Education Committee and the Courses Committee on criteria for writing experience courses.

8. CAI

UWP will be responsible for coordination of CAI and for mentoring its instructors.

9. Evaluation and Program Review

Funds for the evaluation of UWP's mission shall be permanently allocated to UWP.

10. Initial Program Review

During the transition period as the UWP shifts from being part of the English department to being an independent program, the program review will have two dimensions:

- a) An initial review (2004-06) or internal review would examine the effectiveness of the MOU between English and the UWP. This would take into account changing enrollment patterns (of undergraduates and graduate students in English); the educational goals of the UWP that might emerge as the program becomes independent and develops a different curriculum; and changes the Department of English might initiate due to changes in its graduate student mentoring. The director of the UWP in collaboration with the Program Committee and the chair of English in consultation with the Graduate Adviser of English will be responsible for this review.
- b) The second review would follow the normal procedures for program review within the university guidelines. This review will be done by the appropriate bodies of the College of Letters & Science and the Academic Senate according to standard review periods and policies (TPPRC).

Attachments

1. MOU between English and UWP
2. Director Recruitment
3. UC Writing Program Reporting Lines